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(54) Title: PEPTIDE INHIBITORS OF HEPATITIS C VIRUS NS3 PROTEASE

(57) Abstract

Fluorinated oligopeptides, especially those having 4,4–difluoro–2–amino butyric acid at the C terminus, may be effective inhibitors of hepatitis C virus NS3 protease. Examples of hexapeptides of the invention, optimised for binding in the S1 specificity pocket of the enzyme, may display IC_{50}s at the sub–micromolar level. Embodiments of tripeptides of the invention, having a keto–acid group at the C–terminus are, likewise, potent inhibitors of NS3 protease.